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Protein metabolism

CATHCART[3] has added a volume on metabolism of proteins to the series of monographs on biochemistry being issued by the publishers cited. There are nine chapters under the following headings: digestion and absorption of proteins, protein regeneration, feeding experiments with abiuret products of digestion, deaminization, influence of food on the composition of the tissues, protein requirements, theories of protein metabolism, starvation, work.

The author says: "The present monograph does not pretend to cover the whole literature of protein metabolism; it consists rather of the discussion of the more important results published during the last decade." Yet the bibliography includes 430 citations. This indicates how extensive is the work done on the protein metabolism of mammals alone as compared with the scattering contributions to protein metabolism in plants. This little volume makes readily available to plant physiologists the status of our knowledge of this subject in mammals. It brings one to the realization of some of the striking similarities between protein metabolism in plants and in mammals, as for instance the power of deaminization. One also comes to appreciate some of the differences appearing in the two groups of organisms, as is shown in the power of synthesizing amino acids.—WILLIAM CROCKER.

Herbals

Mrs. ARBER[4] has brought to the knowledge of botanists some very interesting information concerning the early history of botany. She has given a general sketch of the evolution of the printed herbal from 1470 to 1670 from a botanical and also an artistic standpoint. Many of these herbals are extremely rare, and Mrs. ARBER has done good service in making them more real to botanists. Of course the text is full of interest, but the numerous illustrations introduce one even more vividly into the botanical atmosphere of three or four centuries ago.

A list of the nine chapter titles will give a better conception of the contents of the volume: (i) "The early history of botany"; (ii) "The earliest printed herbals"; (iii) "The early history of the herbal in England"; (iv) "The botanical renaissance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries"; (v) "The evolution of the art of plant description"; (vi) "The evolution of plant classification"; (vii) "The evolution of the art of botanical illustration"; (viii) "The doctrine of signatures, and astrological botany"; (ix) "Conclusions." —J. M. C.

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[3] CATHCART, E. P., The physiology of protein metabolism. pp. viii+142. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1912.

[4] ARBER, AGNES, Herbals, their origin and evolution, a chapter in the history of botany (1470–1670). 8vo. xviii+253. *pls. 22. figs. 113.* Cambridge: University Press. 1912.